The overburdened mother: How social workers view the private sphere

Alberth, Lars; Bühler-Niederberger, Doris

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:
Verlag Barbara Budrich

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:
Alberth, L., & Bühler-Niederberger, D. (2017). The overburdened mother: How social workers view the private sphere. In T. Betz, M.-S. Honig, & I. Ostner (Eds.), *Parents in the Spotlight: Parenting Practices and Support from a Comparative Perspective* (pp. 153-170). Opladen: Verlag Barbara Budrich. https://doi.org/10.3224/zff.si11y2016/2017.09

Lars Alberth and Doris Bühler-Niederberger

The overburdened mother: How social workers view the private sphere

Die überforderte Mutter: Wie Sozialarbeiter die Privatsphäre sehen

Abstract
Child protection intervenes in situations of inadequate parenting. Analyses of child protection routines offer insight into the ideas about the proper care and handling of children that guide interventions in this field. This article is based on interviews with social workers that were used to reconstruct 70 cases of professional interventions by systematically categorizing social workers' reasoning and the trajectories of their interventions. Our analysis shows that approaches to parents are strongly gendered and organized around mother-focused routines. Such routines aim at a concept of private life that – in the way it is fenced in and asymmetric regarding its gender and generational order – is out of step with broader conceptions of gender and family relations. Our data show that more innovative ideas about parenting and its enhancement are absent from child protection practices.

Key words: gender, motherhood, social work, sociology of professions, child protection, parenting

Zusammenfassung
Der Kinderschutz greift in Situationen ein, in denen Eltern unangemessen erziehen. Analysen von Kinderschutzmechananismen geben Einblick in diejenigen Vorstellungen über einen angemessenen Umgang mit den Kindern, die handlungsleitend für Interventionen in diesem Bereich sind. Grundlage dieses Artikels bilden Interviews mit Sozialarbeiter(inne)n; diese wiederum dienten der Rekonstruktion von 70 Fällen professioneller Interventionen, indem die Beweggründe und die Interventionsverläufe der Sozialarbeiter(innen) systematisch katagorisiert wurden. Unsere Analysen zeigen, dass die Herangehensweisen an die Eltern stark geschechtsbezogen sind und sich auf mütterbezogene Verfahrensroutinen konzentrieren. Diese Routinen zielen auf ein Konzept des Privatlebens ab, das – bezogen auf deren rigide Grenzziehungen und deren Asymmetrie zur Generationenabfolge und zur Geschlechterordnung – nicht mit umfassenderen Konzepten der Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern und innerhalb von Familien im Einklang steht. Unsere Ergebnisse zeigen auf, dass innovativere Ansätze zum „Eltern-Sein" und dessen Stärkung in der Kinderschutzpraxis nicht vorhanden sind.

Key words: Gender, Mutterschaft, Sozialarbeit, Professionssoziologie, Kinderschutz, Eltern-Sein (parenting)

Zeitschrift für Familienforschung – Journal of Family Research – Special Issue/Sonderheft 2016/2017, S. 153–170
https://doi.org/10.3224/zff.si11y2016/2017.09

Introduction: Responsible parents or good mothers?

Parents are held responsible for social order in society. This may well be truer in current public discourses than it was a few decades ago (see articles by Daly and Vandenbroeck et al. *in this issue*; Lee et al. 2014). However, in European history, such thinking can be traced back to the 16th century Reformation, and the sermons and writings of religious leaders. Martin Luther, in particular, often exhorted parents to live up to their obligations. He promised paradise for good parenthood, declaring it would be 'the best path towards heaven' (Luther 1883: 10, 642, our translation), and he invoked hell for parents who let their children just stroll around, curse, and do whatever they wanted (ibid: 10, 643, our translation). He was by no means interested only in the souls of the children to be saved; he also had a strong interest in social order. The Catholic reformers of the 17th and 18th century were no different: they exerted similar moral pressure on parents, and their concern was to have a disciplined and industrious population. Their sanctions for careless parents, however, were more tangible than Luther's: they withdrew the parish alms (Julia 1998; Snyders 1971).

These early attempts to use family discipline for the purposes of social order always addressed 'the parents', and it was only at the turn of the 19th century when such endeavours became differentiated with respect to gender. Moralists and new experts started to delineate different aspects of the mothers' and fathers' duties, developing different policies and messages to re-educate women to be responsible mothers, and men to be responsible fathers. This is related to another clear difference from the earlier moral appeals for responsible parenthood: good mothers and good fathers had to be produced socially – they had to be educated and guided by experts with their technologies. Parenthood was no longer a moral obligation that could simply be expected of every member of society. This precariousness in the virtues of parenthood has continued ever since, especially for the poor.

Historians have paid particular attention to the directions governing mothers. The repertory of measures included educational advice books, 'moral weeklies', medical campaigns, and an emerging and very controlling welfare policy (Badinter 1984; Hulbert 2003; Schlumbohm 1983; Schütze 1991; Toppe 1999). Socially desirable fatherhood has been given less attention, although there were also decisive attempts to turn men into decent fathers: men who would not spend their evenings in pubs but with the family; spend money carefully; and abstain from drinking, cursing, and political agitation. There was a whole bundle of measures designed to reach this goal, with social housing playing one important role among others. In this context, the newly enacted laws on guardianship became powerful tools (Joseph et al. 1977). These laws allowed for a disempowerment of men who did not meet the requirements of good fatherhood, directing local authorities to guide and support mothers instead of patriarchal authority (Donzelot 1980).

When social work started to emerge as a profession at the beginning of the 20th century, it focused on women. Many activities targeted women, 'treating them within the framework of the prevailing gender ideologies' (Leskosek 2009: 9). Gordon (2008) sheds light on the 'maternalism' of child welfare policies promoted by women's groups in late 19th and early 20th centuries. Maternalist policies were rooted in ideas that identified womanhood with generalized motherhood (Koven/Michel 1990). According to Gordon (2008), such programmes embodied many conservative pitfalls and yielded poor results,

all the while providing respect, power, and social welfare occupations to the women organizing them. One may well assume that the professionalization of social work supported this clear gendered divide in parenthood, at least in the groups among the population that tended to come under its scrutiny.

This article does not aim to provide a conclusive analysis of gender as a category in the development of social work and its programmes, because gender as an analytical category is not yet a core category in the discipline of social work (Leskosek 2009: 8). These opening remarks simply set the scene for its core question: What concepts of family education and parenthood do social work practitioners draw upon today, and to what extent are they shaped by taken-for-granted assumptions about motherhood and fatherhood? In other words, to what extent does gender factor into the routines of social work practitioners?

In recent decades, gender issues have been integrated into social work's teaching curricula, making students aware of the influence of gender ideologies on social work practice. This corresponds with the recognition of the need to involve fathers as participants in child protection work. Whereas there are clear attempts to introduce such adaptations in training curricula and research – at least in English-speaking countries – the problem still seems to be unsolved on the practical level (Maxwell et al. 2012; Scourfield 2006; Shapiro/Krysik 2010). However, outside the realm of social work, parents' behaviour has been gaining increasing public and professional attention in recent years (see Introduction to *this issue*; Betz 2014). The increasing attention being paid to the qualities of parenthood is not marked by gender – at least not on the level of rhetoric and programmatic declarations. Rather, it centres on early stimulation, support of children's learning and school careers, along with intellectual and cultural activities at home – aspects of parenting, therefore, that are not evidently gendered (Ermisch 2008; Schaub 2010). Given these developments, one might formulate the hypothesis that social workers are approaching parenthood in a new and gender-neutral way. We shall now present an empirical study of child protection in Germany in order to test this hypothesis.[1] As our research field is child protection, our discussion and the validity of our results will remain confined to this domain of social work.

Social work's professional *mandate*: Theoretical elements of the study

Parenting refers to 'ideas on the proper care and handling' of children in familial arrangements. It may be contested and problematized in different ways – for example, through everyday critique, paediatricians, educational guide books, or magazines (Keller et al. 2005). However, it is situations of child abuse and neglect that are particularly marked by inadequate or absent parenting. In Germany, corresponding interventions are legitimated by federal laws referring to the child's well-being and the parents' inability or disinclination to protect their children from harm.

1 The study was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) from February 2010 until January 2013 (Bu 1034/8-1).

Basis for any intervention is § 1666 of the Civil Code, stating: 'If the physical or mental weal or the health of the child is threatened, and the parents are unwilling or unable to avert such threat, the family court has to take the measure necessary to avert the threat' (Deutscher Bundestag 2008: 1188). Although the family courts are the ultimate institutions to legitimize any intervention against the parents' will, social control over the parent(s)' acutely or potentially inadequate parenting is exercised by the *Jugendamt* (Youth Welfare Office) on the municipal level.

The office holds exclusive power of control and intervention when children appear to be at risk in their families. Recent statistics on the professional composition of the workforce employed in Germany's 658 youth welfare offices show that out of the 34,797 pedagogical and administrative staffers counted on December 31st, 2010, 18,651 held a university degree in social work or social pedagogy, whereas the second largest group, clerks of public administration, comprised 4,117 persons (Statistisches Bundesamt 2012). Although psychologists, members of several therapeutic occupations, attorneys, and even two physicians can be found on the youth welfare offices' rosters, social work has managed to establish itself as the dominant profession at the centre of this organization.

Hence, the different threads of public responses to child abuse and neglect come together in the hands of not just one organization but one profession: it is the social workers who record allegations of abuse and neglect, who manage and carry out risk assessments and protective responses, who decide on and supervise services (usually carried out by further public and private organizations), who prepare court hearings on parental rights, and who hold the general steering function and responsibility for case management as laid down in Book VIII of the Social Code. It is standard procedure for these tasks to be carried out by the very same person who is almost always a member of the social work profession. This concentration on one professional allows us to take the phenomenon of child abuse and neglect as a litmus test for social work's ideas around parenting.

From the sociology of the professions, we know that occupations or professions that hold a legal license to carry out certain activities exclusively – in our case: the control of inadequate or absent parenting – usually also claim a mandate, by which we mean a model of the proper conduct members of that occupation have to follow in their work (Hughes 1958). Such a mandate does not just define how to perform the occupation's technical activities. It comprises further claims on the right 'to tell society what is good and right for the individual and for society at large in some aspect of life. Indeed, they set the very terms in which people may think about this aspect of life' (Hughes 1958: 79). The power of a profession lies in its ability to take the problem for which it has successfully acquired a license and redefine it according to its mandate. By delegating the task of control in allegations of child abuse and neglect to social work, the definition of how to respond properly to inadequate parenting is subjected to social work's conceptions of 'specific people, events, and circumstances as concrete instances' (Miller/Vitus 2009: 739) of child abuse and neglect. Social work's mandate is empirically visible in the profession's everyday '*social problems work*' (Holstein/Miller 2003); that is, the professional practice of dealing with individual clients and their troubles.

How does social work define its mandate when dealing with child abuse and neglect, and how is the mandate put into effect via its social problems work, its everyday casework routines? The scholarly literature on the social work discipline in Germany concen-

trates on orienting and guiding thoughts with respect to routines, rather than on empirical analyses of such problem work. This academic literature, which serves for the education of social work practitioners, reveals a noticeable shift from a perspective on individual perpetrators and victims to a more holistic view of child abuse and neglect, favouring what the profession calls 'systems theories' and corresponding therapies and counselling strategies (e.g. Hollstein-Brinkmann/Staub-Bernasconi 2005; Kleve/Wirth 2013). By claiming multicausal explanations for the occurrence of incidents of abuse and neglect, academic expression of the social work mandate moves away from a punitive approach of control, and partially relieves individuals of responsibility for their actions. Claiming support or help for the family is coupled with the rejection of exercising control (exemplary for this position: Hildenbrand 2014). Both the shift towards the 'family system' and the claim of support contribute clearly to the official claim of social work as it appears in the profession's rhetoric documented in the scholarly literature (Hafen 2008; Kraus 2014) as well as in statements by social work practitioners (Alberth et al. 2014).

However, families are not isolated, monadic units. They are ordered by the *intersection of* the two dimensions of *gender* and *generation*; and the status of the family's members – that is, the rights, obligations, and power of parents and children, mothers and fathers, daughters and sons – is shaped according to both these dimensions (Alanen 1994; Bühler-Niederberger 2011). Whereas gender and generation thoroughly structure societies, status based on achievement also became the ideal of public life. But it is the private quality of the family wherein the ascribed statuses of gender and generation gain their utmost importance. The notions of motherhood and fatherhood give account of these categories. Historically, they were developed alongside these categories and interests in the social order. Meanwhile, the contemporary notion of parenthood insists on the generational divide, placing gender in the background with respect to both children and parents. In their everyday interactions, social workers have to respond to their clients' status with respect to this twofold relationality and they may do so differently depending on their idea of parenting. Whereas the 'system vocabulary' makes it possible to hush up such positioning, it re-enters the everyday social problems work that is always a work done towards and with individuals at the intersection of these dimensions.

The guiding question for our research can be formulated in terms of three core theoretical elements regarding how practitioners relate to *gender and generation*: a) which members of the family will be the focus and target of any intervention, b) who or what is defined as the causes for 'inadequate' parenting, and c) how is adequate parenting to be restored? In answering these questions, we are looking for assumptions that are taken for granted by practitioners; that is, for the everyday routines of their *social problem work* in which their mandate is enacted. The focus on practitioners' narrations and case reconstructions provides empirical access to such routines. In earlier publications on this data, we have already shown the dominance of the generational order, because the child protection workers' accounts are centred on adult parents and their lack of compliance with interventions, whereas children are often portrayed using comparatively mundane vocabularies of everyday life or are even not referred to at all (Alberth/Bühler-Niederberger 2015; Bühler-Niederberger et al. 2014). This contribution goes on to examine the gender effects of social work interventions regarding proper parenting.

Study design, data collection, and data analysis

Sample. Interviews with social workers were conducted in five communities[2] as part of a three-year study reconstructing different professional approaches in the German child protection system. Social work is the central profession responsible for the coordination and implementation of interventions into families in response to allegations of child abuse and neglect. We shall draw on 62 interviews with members of this profession along with 12 observations of team meetings that are held routinely by local youth welfare offices to discuss current cases (the 'case conferences').

Data collection. The interviews (lasting 60 to 90 minutes) combined a narrative approach with additional semi-structured sections. The question to stimulate narrations was: *'Could you tell us about your most recent case of maltreatment or neglect of a child not older than six years?'*[3] This triggered the interviewees' accounting of cases; that is, they offered presentations, interpretations, and legitimations of case trajectories. The semi-structured part of the interview aimed at completing information on the cases: on actual events, that is, measures, turning points in the proceeding, duration, and outcome or current state of the intervention. Subsequent questions aimed at reconstructing additional cases contrasting – in the view of the interviewees – the ones they had just described. The interviewing intended to combine both factual information on the cases and the interviewees' respective interpretations, reflections, and judgments. This gave access to the practical knowledge instead of just mere attitudes and ideologies.

Data analysis. Our unit of analysis was not the interviewees, but the cases they reported. A total of 58 cases met the criteria as formulated in our opening question that asked for cases of children aged 0 to 6 under scrutiny for child maltreatment, neglect, or suspicions of such incidents, but excluding cases of sole sexual abuse. However, twelve additional cases with older children were also considered. This resulted in a larger sample of 70 cases in total, hence more valid results, and did not pose a problem in the context of the analysis of gender effects. The 70 cases can now be analysed with regard to the meaning and interpretation that the interviewees applied in their narrations and to the actual case proceedings as reported in the semi-structured parts of the case reconstructions. This allows for a mutual validation of interpretive and factual information.

The interviewees provided information with regard to a) what they took to be the main problem in the family; b) how they worked with this family, what their aims were, how they saw the obstacles, and how they judged the success of their work; c) the measures that were decided on; and d) the case trajectory, including the beginning, the end, or current state of their intervention; turning points in the intervention; and the reasoning given by the social worker for the approach adopted. In our analysis, we took this information to serve as the empirical indicators for our theoretical concept 'mandate' as it is enacted in daily routines (i.e. social problems work). For the indicators, we identified a

2 The selection aimed to account for differences with regard to urban versus rural, economic situation, and geographical location of the communities in East and West Germany.

3 In German, we asked for the last case of 'Kindeswohlgefährdung oder Verdacht auf Kindeswohlgefährdung', which literally translates into 'actual or suspected endangerment of the child's welfare'.

number of sub-dimensions related to the other qualities we were interested in. For example, the definition of the client's main problem – as one aspect of the mandate – was broken down in the following way: client is overburdened, client is violent, client is aggressive or resentful, and client is absent in the narrative. The frequencies of these categories were quantified for different members of the family (i.e. fathers/mothers, children/parents) in order to gain insight into gendered and generationally patterned ideas of social work. The categorization proceeded in the to and fro between data gathering and coding. Coding sessions involved at least two members of the research team to ensure the discursive validation of the interpretations (Corbin/Strauss 1990).

Results: Mothers and their life management in the focus of social work

Where a child protection narration starts from

More than half of the case narratives (52%, $n = 36$) started with the phrase 'there is this mother …' Some grammatical variations were to be found, such as 'this was a mother who …' or 'in this case, the mother was …', but, in a very obvious way, the mother was introduced at the beginning of the narrative. Sometimes the interviewers even repeated their opening question – while the interviewee was taking a breather to sort the information she or he wanted to give concerning the mother – 'could you tell us about a case in which there had been suspected child maltreatment or neglect of a child aged between 0 and 6 years?' However, the interviewees still continued their narrative around the figure of the mother. A further 17% ($n = 12$) of cases started with 'there is this family…', and in 27% of the cases ($n = 19$), the interviewee referred to the child first – who was always asked about first in the interviewer's question. In 4% ($n = 3$) of cases, the narrative started with the father, but in two of these cases, there had been an explicit request for a case in which the father had been an important figure, because the interviewee had already presented several mother-centred narratives. Evidently, the child protection story in the logic of social work usually starts with the mother's situation and behaviour, and has to be understood from this point of departure.

What's wrong with the mother?

The mother is 'overburdened' (in German: *überfordert*) – she is sometimes even 'totally overburdened' and 'hopelessly overburdened'. We found this description of the mother in 25% ($n = 18$) of the case descriptions. In total, mothers were described in a similar way in 60% of cases, even if this word was not always used explicitly. Mothers were said to be 'unable' or to be a mother who 'could not manage it', 'could not handle things' – in short: could not cope with daily demands. This description of the mother as unable or overburdened was mentioned several times at the beginning of the narrative, as a sort of summary characterisation. The introduction to the child protection story was then: 'there was a mother and she was totally overburdened.' No other characterisation

of mothers was of such similar obviousness. 'Overburdening' is, therefore, a professional code in social work routines, although it cannot really be found in the academic literature. The mere words 'overburdened' or 'overburdening' appeared no less than 35 times when describing actual cases without further explanation. It was taken to be a self-evident term.

What are the 'burdens' of these mothers (overburdened male partners were mentioned in only four cases) that they are unable to bear? Certainly it is not the burden of being a *poor* mother, as it tended to be in the early days of social work. Such had been the hard and mostly physical wage labour of these working class women, as well as the additional work as a mother and housewife at the end of long working days. Only in a very few of our cases was wage labour mentioned at all; the mothers in our case narratives seemed to rely mostly on other income sources such as the male partners' salary, welfare, child support, or alimony payments. The 'overburdened mother' has to be understood as a mother who cannot cope with her duties as a housewife and mother of her children in the expected manner. Sometimes the inability to manage financial conditions and to cope with the demands and impositions of the partner were also mentioned. However, it was the inability to cope with household duties that constituted a major point of social workers' concern: there are 'no curtains in the apartment', 'the refrigerator is nearly empty', 'the baby room is clean, but looks like a storage room', 'the apartment is disorderly and dirty', 'mother does not manage to have a tidy apartment', 'the apartment is not yet fully equipped and there are no age-appropriate toys', or 'children have been wearing their underpants for two weeks … the mother can't get anything done'. These are some of the mothers' shortcomings mentioned in the case narratives. When mothers' qualities in child-rearing became the focus of attention, it was often enough a lack of ability in relation to a structured child management: 'she can't enforce rules', 'she can't delineate boundaries', and 'the child is not properly toilet trained'. Again, these verdicts appearing on the list of deficiencies refer to the mothers' lack of everyday efficiency.

Whereas social workers pointed most often to the mother's inability to get things done, more deeply rooted mental problems were mentioned as impacting negatively on their life-management skills in only a rather small proportion of 19% of women (n = 13). For these cases, social workers referred to psychological diagnoses, ranging from rather unspecific 'psychological problems', 'strained', or 'unstable' (n = 8) to 'depression' (n = 4), or 'borderline' (n = 2). Even 'bipolarity' and 'bulimia' were applied. Alcohol or drug problems were mentioned for 19% of women. All these additional problems were seen to be interconnected in some way with mothers' inability to cope with the demands of being a good housewife and mother. However, they were of minor importance for the logic of intervention, as we shall go on to show.

Working with mothers step by step: Managing daily life

The aim was to guide mothers to become orderly housewives and better mothers, to manage daily life in an organized way that includes financial matters, administrative affairs, and contact with agencies. They are supposed to learn all this under the close supervision of the social worker. Mothers are meant to learn by observation: a 'family help', a home visiting social worker, demonstrates how the household can be cleaned and ordered. This

is not just meant to be a temporary support. Such an intervention is expected to have a long-lasting outcome: a mother who is capable of managing her daily life all by herself. For example, one of the interviewees said: 'It may sensitize the mother.' The following quotes describe such help:

> When we started, before feast days and such things, the family help had to organize donations to fill up the refrigerator ... it was, therefore, very evident that more help was needed. She managed to clean their apartment every time we visited them, but probably not every day. (Case #25)

> We went there and, well ... 'This is not nice here, you could decorate the children's rooms a bit, no, and you may as well consider ... well, we have an organization here and you can get free toys for the children, and if they have something to occupy them, they won't run through the apartment like crazy, and there is some more peace and quiet'. (Case #23)

> Family help works not only on the mother's behaviour, but also on topics such as relationship problems, finances, relatives, and housing. The housing question was a big issue in this case: 'Can we still live here when the second child arrives? Is there enough space?' (Case #26)

> And we try to initiate a crisis intervention for families in such cases, and to get someone as soon as possible who ... in this case, we have to negotiate with the public employment agency, so the family has something to eat, that they get some money ... to fill out the applications, to contact the housing cooperative; compulsory re-housing will be unavoidable, I guess, but a delay, so we have some wriggle room to look for an apartment for the mother and her two kids. (Case #20)

> Okay, then visiting a paediatrician, making an appointment for a check-up at the centre of social paediatrics, attending an agency to support early learning, canvassing all the kindergartens in the area ... these were the most important things she had to do now. And then, that the child gets proper toilet training, he's almost four years old ... At that time, I went there twice a week to check on it. (Case #106).

What social workers aim to do is teach life management step by step. Some pedagogic advice might be included in this programme too, as the quotes show. Such advice focuses mostly on good habits. This corresponds to the lack of practical competence in managing her daily life, which is considered to be the overburdened mother's main problem.

> They eat together and the TV is on. Parents are sitting in front of the screen, and the little daughter is expected to turn her back to the TV and she always turns her head around, and the situation explodes because she's not supposed to watch TV. To sum it up, very logical things in everyday situations, and we try to alleviate situations in order to avoid escalations. (Case #22)

> We had to instruct the mother that children have to sit at the table during mealtime. (Case #4)

> Yes, we took care that parents played with the children, went outdoors regularly ... did not constantly yell at them. (Case #57)

Educational advice took the form of training good habits. More sensitive points of parental behaviour were addressed less frequently. Mothers rarely got involved in a shared process of reflecting on their educational practices with the social worker. We found only six case narratives demonstrating counselling going beyond such simple training. Here are two examples:

> At some point, when she is living in a bigger apartment in which both kids have their own room, when the financial situation is somehow secured ... and simply just, what she [the mother] wished for herself, is that she's going to get feedback on her parenting behaviour. Well, that's already happened. Sometimes, when she got a little snappy and proclaimed [to the children]: 'We're gonna do it

> this way!', we were able to counsel her on how to approach such situations [of being too snappy with the children]. (Case #54)
>
> If there was a good occasion, I talked with the mother about some educational stuff. When the boy came from kindergarten, he immediately grabbed the TV guide or switched on the PlayStation ... Cautiously, I tried to talk about such things, that it might not be very good for the child. In the morning, the boy has to check his blood sugar level and he has to be bribed to do that, so he is allowed to watch TV for half an hour. And I tried to show them that the child might get used to such rewards, and it might be difficult to reduce them afterwards. And I said, it would be best for such a young child to watch TV only rarely. They completely agreed, but took it to be difficult to withdraw rewards once they had been given ... the father, in particular, was extremely soft hearted and found it hard to be consistent. (Case #31)

Taking the mother by the hand

Whereas the mother has to be guided closely to improve her life management skills, this should by no means be done against her inner conviction. On the contrary, her compliance is essential for the social worker. That mothers should 'let themselves be guided', that they are 'taken by the hand' were expressions used several times to describe good cooperation. To win such a faithful and insightful attitude may require some efforts and concessions from the social workers. This is what the following case shows:

> A mother returns from prison, she was there for a narcotic offence, and takes up the care for her children again. A home visiting social worker is trying to support the mother. The kindergarten report states that the youngest has head lice. The social worker's primary goal is to build a relationship of trust with the depressive mother, taking small steps towards proper life management, beginning with the provision of adequate furniture. The case isn't closed at the time of the interview. The intervention logic of the social worker becomes evident when he says:
>
> Of course this has to stop with the lice and all. Maybe in three or four weeks or in five weeks ... or she won't open the door anymore. The mother was very depressed at that time. She didn't move anymore. (Case #19)

Good cooperation with mothers is described in the following ways:

> She accepted our help thankfully ... it was really good cooperation and I think that the parents really felt accepted. (Case #25)
>
> I got to know this woman as a mother who is really making an effort, who wants to do something for her child. Such mothers are easy to motivate and one can say to them. 'Look this is a field in which we might cooperate and move forwards, and you are doing great in this and that respect.' (Social worker, Case #424)

The client's inner motivation to accept professional intervention is pivotal for social workers. We counted the number of words making an identifiable statement (such as a part of a phrase, a phrase, or a couple of phrases that could be classified to one of our codes). Of a total of 745 statements on parents, 46% concerned compliance with the intervention; 20%, life management (except educational behaviour); 17%, educational behaviour; and 17%, parents' character, illnesses, life history, and so forth (Bühler-Niederberger et al. 2014).

The following short accounts of two cases may further illustrate this aspiration towards an alliance with the mother. The first case describes a real showpiece case. Accord-

ing to the social worker, it was a highly favourable development due to the mother's high degree of compliance. The second case is the opposite; the social worker is very upset: 'This mother makes me livid.' Both cases, however, have a lot in common: The women are very young and they are seemingly not too bad as mothers. However, one of them accepts the intervention gratefully, and is said to live a well-ordered life afterwards. The other is rebellious and sticks to her easy going life style.

> *A showpiece case:* A seventeen-year-old girl was pregnant. She was meant to go to a mother–child institution but refused. The social worker had already started to work with her some weeks before the birth to ensure that everything was well-prepared for the baby. When the baby was born, she lived for some time with her partner. According to the social worker, this was not good for her, as this young man was 'quite a dictator'. They split up. The young girl did not know 'how to do her housework reasonably and how to rear her child'. But she 'let herself be guided terrifically'. She made progress following the advice of the social workers, and completed her education as well. The child developed well. Now, after 3 years, she is living in the neighbouring village, she's married, and she's expecting her second baby. (Case #3)

> *An unsuccessful case:* The mother is very young, of Russian origin. There were loud disputes with the father. The neighbours called the police, which is how the intervention started. The household is neglected. The family court, however, denies an application to have the child taken into custody, but makes an order that the mother should work regularly and send the child to kindergarten. The mother is also meant to separate from her partner, but this never happens. The child is strongly attached to the mother. However, the social worker complains that the mother behaves more like an older sister who knows how to handle little children. According to the kindergarten, the child is in good shape and sociable, so it is 'not easy to prove something against the mother', the social worker complains. However, there is a lack of maternal feeling, as the social worker says, the mother goes to work 'as she likes', and brings the child to kindergarten 'whenever she wants'. The mother does not disguise the fact that she thinks: 'I do whatever I like and you can't change that.' Appointments with the social worker are skipped. If the social worker visits the mother at her home, the partner (who is meant to have left) would just be sitting on the sofa. The social worker reports that once the father was there with a rabbit shedding a lot of hair, but the mother did not mind and simply said: 'During summer it's worse', indicating that the father was present in the recent past. The social worker did not disguise the fact that she takes this behaviour to be very recalcitrant, and that this mother makes her livid. (Case #108)

Excluding fathers

In their routines, social workers addressed the female adult in the family as 'housewife and mother', and judged her to be overburdened, but more or less adaptive. In contrast, they regard their male partners against a negative backdrop of aggressive masculinity. Whereas only four mothers (6%) were taken to be violent towards other family members, this was true for 20 fathers or male partners (29%). Taking into account that more than one-third of the fathers or partners (namely 25) were not mentioned at all, this adds up to 44% of men being considered to be violent against family members. In short, more than seven times more men than women are judged to be violent. Social workers also take men to be clearly less favourably disposed towards the professional intervention, with 33% of men depicted as refusing or even being aggressive towards the social worker compared to 19% of women (see Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of women and men attributed by social workers

Characteristics mentioned: (multiple attributions possible)	Mother N/in %/in % of described cases	Father/male partner n/in %/in % of described cases
Overburdened	42/60%/61%	6/9%/13%
Violent towards family members	4/6%/6%	20/29%/44%
Aggressive/recalcitrant in regard to intervention	13/19%/19%	15/21%/33%
Not described at all	1 (intervention starts with mother's death)	25/36%

Given this clear gender divide in the perception of men and women, it is not surprising that women are often advised explicitly to separate from their partners. If such separation is not demanded, it is nonetheless welcomed and aimed at in more subtle ways. Separation may even be made a condition for the child to remain within the family home, as in the case of the young Russian woman outlined earlier who made her social worker 'livid' (Case #108). In some cases, the improvement of the family situation is explained by the male partner having left. We presented such a case in Case #3. In other cases, the failure of the intervention is explained by the partner's continued presence in the family, and he is framed as a constant obstacle to the intervention:

> It was suggested to the mother: 'You might think about leaving, maybe to the women's shelter for a while and take the child with you.' But the mother declined. This is why our decision was very clear and we discussed it among colleagues […] the child should be taken into custody, as there had once more been a situation of partner violence at the weekend and the police had been there. And I told the woman that she had really disappointed me. Because she says: 'I protect the child,' but she is not able to say to her partner: 'There is the door and don't come back here anymore.' I told her clearly that she should stop sweeping things under the carpet, and she should stop backpedalling. (Case #20)

> This situation is described in the following way: the male partner left the mother because of a younger woman shortly before the marriage should have been celebrated, but he came back and they had a third child together. 'There is a psychologist working with the mother and she said to the mother afterwards: "Will you please split up with your partner?", but then the mother always adopts the stance: "No, now more than ever, no!" The relationship is completely desolate, but nothing changes, whether I am there or not. They really should split up. It is only this problem with the partner.' (Case #109)

> Family help was not effective in this case. It was the same problem constellation again and again. There were those violent disputes and the father should already have left the house quite a while ago. … And the mother did not accept anything in regard to, for example, children's school and their school lunch box, and all those child-welfare issues ... and there was no cooperation in the sense that we show what the deficiencies are, and she improves her childrearing behaviour. (Case #21)

> They said that father had moved out – and that's what has to be said on the topic of alcohol and violence. In fact, he had not moved out, and very often when we came – and we purposefully made unannounced visits – he was there. It became evident that the agreements in regard to our cooperation were not being followed. (Case #27)

The professionals' reaction to the male partner, who is perceived to be the perpetrator, is therefore his removal from the family. In no less than 20% of cases (n = 14), the professional intervention was clearly aimed at the couple's separation. As the partner constella-

tion was only mentioned in 45 cases, more than 30% of (still existing) relationships were not appreciated by the social workers.

Obviously the social workers' mandate does not provide other reactions to what it takes to be the male character. The usual practice, which we characterized as 'taking by the hand' and 'teaching life management step by step', was enacted only towards two fathers. In both cases, the intervention was addressed to both parents and the social worker spoke mostly of 'the parents'. One might attribute the mother centredness of the intervention to the fact that, unlike mothers, fathers and male partners are rarely seen as being overburdened (see Table 1). This might be the reason why they are not addressed. However, it might simply be due to the fact that they are men. This interpretation is supported by a closer look at two exceptional couple constellations. Here, social workers described mothers as being violent and not cooperative at all, whereas fathers appear cooperative and even anxiously trying to save the family.

> The father is 28; the mother, 42 years old. They have two children aged four and six, and the mother also has a 19-year-old daughter from an earlier relationship. The mother is judged to be 'mentally ill and totally overburdened'. She can't control herself when she is upset, and once destroyed the room of the four-year-old boy completely, as well as hitting him. The father went with both children to the youth welfare office seeking help. He is judged to be a caring father and husband, doing his best to keep the family together. The wife has to attend anti-aggression training, and there is a family helper who tries to work with her. She very often cancels or simply skips the counselling sessions in the youth welfare office. Meanwhile, the father calls to make new appointments for her. But he says that he can't be more active in the family because he works full-time in a welfare profession. The social worker does not seek a solution in which the father might become the more important or even main care person. Instead, the social worker who has quite some empathy for the young man thinks he should split up with his aggressive wife. However, he does not say anything about how the situation of the children might be solved if that happens. Anyway, such a suggestion does not fit with the father's dedication to his family. (Case #111)

> A social worker had reported several cases during the interview in which the stepfather was aggressive or abusive. Interviewers ask her if there are no cases in which stepfathers protect their stepchildren from an aggressive mother. She reports the case of a stepfather who gives the children a feeling of safety, who even cares more reliably, and the children are also aware of that, saying that it would be difficult for them without him. However, as far as the case is described, there is no information that he might be provided with the help or support of social workers. (Case #104)

In both cases, social workers appreciated the interest of these fathers for their families, but in none of the 70 cases was any attempt made to replace the mother in her care duties partly or entirely by the father.

Trivializing violence

The work with the overburdened mother may be intended to guarantee the best possible protection for the child. At its heart lies the vision of a good family life. It is the vision of a well-ordered daily routine: regular meals, healthy food, structured dinner situation, reasonable television consumption, and regular bedtimes. All these rules and regulations are meant to be embedded in a nice and cosy ambience, so that the educational demands are sweetened and softened for the child. It is taken for granted that such a family is the happiest place for children, although this is not supported by any solid research evidence. To

at least keep up the appearance of such orderly family life produces considerable familial conflict, and the demands made are mainly imposed on the women. In a representative study, young mothers were asked about the most stressful situation with their toddlers, and they pointed to family meals (Newson/Newson 1968). Since this study was done, many young families may have softened their expectations regarding family rules and discipline. However, these expectations remain in force in the mandate of social work.

This professional approach focuses on the arrangement of the private sphere, as has been the case in conceptions of social order since the 19th century (Donzelot 1980). But, leaving that to one side for now, the more immediate problem in the context of child protection is a different one. Contrary to its child protection intent, the programmatic approach does not actually *address* children. The mother's cooperation is needed to realize this ideal of private life, and any improvement for the child has to be achieved in an indirect way. Because the programme requires mother's compliance, long and exhaustive negotiations become necessary; the sheer amount of time spent by the interviewees talking on this subject already demonstrates this. In addition, concessions to the mother may become necessary, as was, for instance, the case with the young children with head lice (see Case #19).

Whereas these child protection practices rely on continuing efforts to gain the mother's compliance and ensure her long-term adaptation to the new ideal of family life, few measures are formulated and pursued that target the children explicitly. Such measures might be, among others, therapy or counselling for children, or direct relief such as peer group activities, play activities, holidays, or weekend excursions. Even taking the child into custody, the most frequent measure supposedly focusing on the child's welfare, is not strictly child-oriented. Case narratives indicate that it was decided very much according to the parents' needs and possibilities. Such a measure would be initiated if parents were sick or if the social worker thought they were otherwise in urgent need of easing their burden. If we count the measures that were taken, a clear generational asymmetry becomes evident (see Table 2).

Table 2: Types of intervention in social work cases

Measures addressing children directly (therapy for child, giving relief, etc.)	**17 (24%)**
Change of institutional setting of children placed in foster care	2 (3%)
Home visiting interventions	60 (86%)
Therapy or counselling for parents	27 (39%)
Control by external agencies (e.g. paediatricians, midwives)	11 (16%)
Legal decisions/Family court	17 (24%)
Custody	29 (41%)
Total (measures) (multiple responses)	163
N (cases)	70 (100%)

There is another way in which the (asymmetric) generational order of the family may be reinforced by the concept of 'overburdening'. The concept is nowhere defined precisely or explicitly, but it becomes clear that the characterisation of a person as 'overburdened' is quite different from the characterization as 'violent'. Our interviewees use the two terms in an almost mutually exclusive way. The clearly gendered judgments over mothers

and their male partners demonstrate this juxtaposition. In the single case of a woman in which the terms were used verbatim and jointly, the overburdening was also presented as a cause of aggression, as something that had to be handled in order to stop the aggression. This characteristic of the use of the term is demonstrated by the two following statements:

> She (i.e. the mother) was not a bad person, really not, she was just overburdened. (Case #22)
>
> If I had had the impression that the parents would be violent towards the children – but I had not had such an impression. They are loving and caring parents, and just overburdened, letting things slide. (Case #25)

And whereas most mothers are judged to be 'overburdened', with social work managing this overburdening, there is a limited capacity to detect and address cases of violence. This is what an analysis of the 70 cases in regard to the 'case trajectory' revealed. These trajectories were identified according to the case deployment and the social worker's reasoning in regard to this deployment, its turning points, and its outcomes. Trajectories were either categorized as centred on *family violence,* on *parental compliance*, or on *parental management of their everyday lives.* A fourth category contains residual cases in which several categories were combined. Table 3 shows that cases in which violent acts against the child defined the trajectory; that is, in which they were presented as being pivotal for professional decisions and the case trajectory, were in fact very rare. Considering that representative studies come to the conclusion that about one-fifth to one-quarter of children experience a violent upbringing in their families (Bussmann et al. 2011; Kassis et al. 2013), the omnipresence of violence is displaced.

Table 3: Case trajectories ($N = 70$)

Case trajectory defined by:	
Family violence	7 (10%)
Parents' compliance	30 (43%)
Parents' life management	24 (34%)
Several logics combined	9 (13%)
N (cases)	70 (100%)

Discussion

Youth welfare offices are entrusted with the control of inadequate parenting when there is suspicion or evidence of children's welfare being endangered. The profession of social work is dominant in these institutions. Starting from theoretical assumptions taken from the sociology of professions, we need to analyse professions as being partially autonomous in defining social problems rather than simply executing a social function in a mechanical way. This is what is meant by the theoretical concept of 'mandate', as the professionals' definition of what to do about the problem and how to do it in their work. Our study focused on the social workers' mandate regarding inadequate parenting and corrective efforts. At the heart of our analysis was the question of a gender bias: in what ways is social work's mandate defined in terms of the gender order? This question gains relevance against the background of social work'sstrongly gendered history and the currently

renewed conceptions of family life influenced by demands arising from the educational system and the labour market (Jurczyk 2014). Scrutinizing a gender bias necessarily implicates the generational order as the intersection of generation and gender structures in private life.

Our reconstruction of the cases resulted in three main insights. First, social work's understanding of good parenting is in fact a reduction to 'good mothering'. It is the woman as mother and housewife who is the central figure and guarantor of social work's model of the private realm as an ordered, structured, fenced-off sphere. This is consistent with a gendered perception of mothers and fathers or male partners; and the attribution of gender traits is obvious and narrow. It is put into a practice that may be characterised as taking mothers by the hand and achieving, step by step, a 'proper' private sphere. This even excludes fathers or male partners, even when they are cooperative and undeniably seeking help.

Second, child protection is clearly not concerned with enhancing parenting practices. Because it is a pure mothering programme, it does not address the parents: it excludes fathers and men as a resource almost entirely, even in the rare cases in which they are taken to be compliant. Furthermore, it is only marginally concerned with ideas about the proper care and handling of children – hence, with what the term 'parenting' addresses (Keller et al. 2005). Only rarely can one observe any attempts to reach beyond structuring and ordering of the household and family life. This corresponds to the 19th and early 20th century social policy of 'order of the family' (Donzelot 1980), an old disciplining programme, separating the private and the public and also excluding the male from the family. In this narrow approach, any attempts at concerted cultivation of children (Lareau 2011), at stimulating and individually supporting children, at involving informal and institutional resources outside the family, at creating room to breathe, and many more desiderata of contemporary parenting ideas are absent.

Third, if we concentrate our attention on the child protection aspect, the programme tends to eliminate awareness of violence against the child. The focus on mothers and perceiving them as overburdened makes it hard to see mothers as potential perpetrators. A clear underestimation of mothers as risk factors for fatal outcomes in child protection was also found by Douglas (2012) in a survey of child protection in the United States. In her study, only 20% of social workers agreed with the (empirically accurate) statement that mothers are the ones who are most likely to kill their children. The low percentage of 'violence stories' in our categorization of case narratives is also evidence of such a bias. There is additionally a fundamental generational asymmetry in this program. All in all, the focus on the overburdened mother does not meet the requirements of child-centred social work. The child's perspective is not considered systematically; rather, the taken-for-granted starting point of what has to be considered the best for the child is 'orderly private life'. There is no doubt about that. A profound generational asymmetry is also indicated by our figures on the interventions that are clearly geared towards the parents (see Table 2). Child-centred social work still seems to be a distant goal – a conclusion that is also supported by other studies (e.g. Forsberg 2014).

A new focus on parenting might be either welcomed or rejected as a new form of governmentality, but youth welfare offices are certainly neither the protagonists nor a secure foundation for measures of parenting support. Instead, they can be considered to be the last resort of an outdated conception of 'the private'.

References

Alanen, Leena (1994): Gender and generation: Feminism and the child question. In: Qvortrup, Jens/ Bardy, Marjatta/Sgritta, Giovanni/Wintersberger, Helmut (Eds.): *Childhood matters. Social theory, practice and politics*. Avebury: Aldershot, pp. 127–142.

Alberth, Lars/Bühler-Niederberger, Doris/Eisentraut, Steffen (2014): Wo bleiben die Kinder im Kinderschutz? Die Logik der Intervention bei Sozialarbeitern, Ärzten und Hebammen. In: Bühler-Niederberger, Doris/Alberth, Lars/Eisentraut, Steffen (Eds.): *Kinderschutz. Wie kindzentriert sind Programme, Praktiken, Perspektiven*? Weinheim/Basel: Beltz Juventa, pp. 26–61.

Alberth, Lars/Bühler-Niederberger, Doris (2015): Invisible children? Professional bricolage in child protection. In: *Children and Youth Services Review, 57*, pp. 149–158.

Badinter, Elisabeth (1984): *Die Mutterliebe. Geschichte eines Gefühls vom 17. Jahrhundert bis heute*. München: dtv.

Betz, Tanja (2014): Risks in early childhood. Reconstructing notions of risk in political reports on children and childhood in Germany. In: *Child Indicators Research, 7*, pp. 769–786.

Bühler-Niederberger, Doris (2011): *Lebensphase Kindheit.* München: Juventa.

Bühler-Niederberger, Doris/Alberth, Lars/Eisentraut, Steffen (2014): Das professionelle Wissen vom Kind im Kinderschutz – zwischen separierendem Blick und Ignoranz. In: Bütow, Birgit/Pomey, Marion/Rutschmann, Myriam/Schär, Clarissa (Eds.): *Sozialpädagogik zwischen Staat und Familie*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 111–131.

Bussmann, Kai-D./Erthal, Claudia/Schroth, Andreas (2011): Effects of banning corporal punishment in Europe. In: Durrant, Joan E./Smith, Anne B. (Eds.): *Global pathways to abolishing physical punishment. Realizing children's rights*. New York: Routledge, pp. 299–322.

Corbin, Juliette/Strauss, Anselm L. (1990): Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. In: *Zeitschrift für Soziologie, 19, 6*, pp. 418–427.

Deutscher Bundestag (2008): Gesetz zur Erleichterung familiengerichtlicher Maßnahmen bei Gefährdung des Kindeswohls. Vom 4. Juli 2008. Berlin: Bundesgesetzblatt I (2008), pp. 1188ff.

Donzelot, Jacques (1980): *The policing of families*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Douglas, Emily, M. (2012): Child welfare workers' training, knowledge, and practice concerns regarding child maltreatment fatalities: An exploratory, multi-state analysis. In: *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 6, 5*, pp. 659–677.

Ermisch, John (2008): Origins of social immobility and inequality. Parenting and early child development. In: *National Institute Economic Review, 205*, pp. 62–71.

Forsberg, Hannele (2014): Child-centred social work in the context of the Finnish child welfare services. In: Bühler-Niederberger, Doris/Alberth, Lars/Eisentraut, Steffen (Eds.): *Kinderschutz. Wie kindzentriert sind Programme, Praktiken, Perspektiven*. Weinheim/ Basel: Beltz Juventa, pp. 172–184.

Gordon, Linda (2008): The perils of innocence, or What's wrong with putting children first. In: *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth, 1, 3*, pp. 331–350.

Hafen, Martin (2008): Die Mandatierung der Sozialarbeit: eine systemtheoretische Analyse und ihre Folgerungen für die Praxis der Sozialarbeit. In: *Theorie und Praxis der Sozialen Arbeit, 59, 6*, pp. 453–459.

Hildenbrand, Bruno (2014): Frühe Hilfen aus soziologischer Sicht. In: *Kontext, 45, 3*, pp. 295–310.

Hollstein-Brinkmann, Heino/Staub-Bernasconi, Silvia (2005): Systemtheorien im Vergleich. Was leisten Systemtheorien für die Soziale Arbeit? Wiesbaden: VS.

Holstein, James A./Miller, Gale (2003): Social constructionism and social problems work. In: Holstein, James, A./Miller, Gale (Eds.): *Challenges and choices*. Hawthorne: Aldine de Gruyter, pp. 70–91.

Hughes, Everett C. (1958): *Men and their work*. London: The Free Press.

Hulbert, Ann (2003): Raising America. Experts, parents, and a century of advice about children. New York: Vintage Books.

Joseph, Isaac/Fritsch, Philippe/Battegay, Alain (1977): *Disciplines à domicile. L'édification de la famille.* Fontenay-sous-Bos: Recherches (Recherches – Fédération des groupes d'études et de recherches institutionelles, 28).

Julia, Dominique (1998): L'enfance entre absolutisme et Lumières (1650–1800). In: Becchi, Egle/Julia, Dominique (Eds.): *Histoire de l'enfance en Occident.* Paris: Seuil, pp. 7–111 (Tome 2).

Jurczyk, Karin (2014): Familie als Herstellungsleistung. Hintergründe und Konturen einer neuen Perspektive auf Familie. In: Jurczyk, Karin/ Lange, Andreas/Thiessen, Barbara (Eds.): *Doing Family. Warum Familienleben heute nicht mehr selbstverständlich ist.* Beltz: Juventa, pp. 50–70.

Kassis, Wassilis/Artz, Sybille/Scambor, Christian/Scambor, Elli/Moldenhauer, Stephanie (2013): Finding the way out: A non-dichotomous understanding of violence and depression resilience of adolescents who are exposed to family violence. In: *Child Abuse & Neglect, 37, 2–3*, pp. 181–199.

Keller, Heidi/Voelker, Susanne/Yovsi, Relindis D. (2005): Conceptions of parenting in different cultural communities: The case of West African Nso and Northern German women. In: *Social Development, 14, 1*, pp. 158–180.

Kleve, Heiko/Wirth, Jan (2013): *Die Praxis der Sozialarbeitswissenschaft. Eine Einführung*. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.

Koven, Seth/Michel, Sonya (1990): Womanly duties: Maternalist politics and the origins of welfare states in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880–1920. In: *The American Historical Review, 95, 4*, pp. 1076–1108.

Kraus, Björn (2014): Soziale Arbeit – Macht – Hilfe und Kontrolle. Grundlegung und Anwendung eines systemisch-konstruktivistischen Machtmodells. In: Kraus, Björn/Krieger, Wolfgang (Eds.): *Macht in der Sozialen Arbeit: Interaktionsverhältnisse zwischen Kontrolle, Partizipation und Freisetzung*. Lage: Jacobs Verlag, pp. 95–112.

Lareau, Annette (2011): *Unequal childhoods*. Berkeley: University of California Press (2nd edition).

Lee, Ellie/Bristow, Jennie/Faircloth, Charlotte/Macvarish, Jan (2014): *Parenting cultures.* Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Leskosek, Vesna (2009): Introduction. In: Leskosek, Vesna (Ed.): *Teaching gender in social work.* Utrecht: ATHENA, pp. 8–15.

Luther, Martin (1883): *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Weimar: H. Böhlau.

Maxwell, Nina/Scourfield, Jonathan/Featherstone, Brid/Holland, Sally/Tolman, Richard (2012): Engaging fathers in child welfare services. In: *Child and Family Social Work, 17*, pp. 160–169.

Miller, Gale/Vitus, Kathrine (2009): Social problems work: The cases of children and youth. In: *Sociology Compass, 3, 5*, pp. 737–753.

Newson, John/Newson, Elizabeth (1968): *Four years old in an urban community*. Chicago, New York: Aldine/Atherton.

Schaub, Maryellen (2010): Parenting for cognitive development from 1950 to 2000. In: *Sociology of Education, 83*, pp. 46–66.

Schlumbohm, Jürgen (1983): *Kinderstuben. Wie Kinder zu Bauern, Bürgern, Aristokraten wurden*. München: dtv.

Schütze, Yvonne (1991): *Die gute Mutter. Zur Geschichte des normativen Musters „Mutterliebe"*. Bielefeld: Kleine.

Scourfield, Jonathan (2006): The challenge of engaging fathers in child protection fathers. In: *Critical Social Policy, 26,* pp. 440–449.

Shapiro, Alyson F./Krysik, Judy (2010): Finding fathers in social work research and practice. In: *Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics, 7, 1*. jswve.org/download/4finding%20fathers%20in%20research%20and%20practice.pdf

Snyders, Georges (1971): *Die große Wende der Pädagogik*. Paderborn: Schöningh.

Statistisches Bundesamt (2012): *Statistiken der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe. Einrichtungen und tätige Personen (ohne Tageseinrichtungen für Kinder) 2010*. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt.

Toppe, Sabine (1999): *Polizey und Geschlecht. Der obrigkeitsstaatliche Mutterschafts-Diskurs in der Aufklärung.* Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag.